

## **DISABILITY ACCESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Fiscal Year 2005

The Disability Access Advisory Committee (DAAC) advises, educates and advocates on issues of accessibility to Town facilities and programs in consultation with Amherst Town government.

Committee members include Deb Waldron, Chairperson; Jean Smyser; Pamela Ledoux; Rebecca Hurwitz; and Madeline Peters, Director of Disability Services, UMass - Amherst. Gerald Weiss is Select Board liaison; and Eunice Torres, DAAC Coordinator and Human Rights Director is the Town staff liaison.

The Committee helped relate our current transition plan to current needs and supported the revision of the transitional plan in the near future. The Committee advised on the reorganization of the Bangs Community Center, the increased fine from \$100 to \$200 for violation of HP parking spaces, sidewalks, crosswalks and applications for variances. The Committee advised on the application and subsequent award of a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG). Other sources of funding were used for the purchase of 3 Hoyer lifts, one for each of the Town's pools, thereby making the pools accessible for persons with limited mobility. Lines of communication between the Committee and the Architectural Access Board were clarified, the result of which is that the Committee now obtains applications for variances in a timely fashion. A representative from the DAAC will attend Planning Board meetings when applicable.

Educational opportunities attended by various members include: The National ADA Conference, The Mass Office on Disability's (MOD) Community Access Monitor Training (meeting partial requirements for certification as Volunteer Community Access Monitors), the MOD Disability Training, and Help America Vote.

The Committee would like to increase its visibility in the community. The subcommittee formed with the intention of creating a booklet entitled "Accessible Amherst" will wait for the outcome of findings from the transition plan before proceeding. The Committee looks forward to interfacing with the Chamber of Commerce to offer trainings about equal rights.

The Disability Access Advisory Committee will continue to work with Town departments to explore ways to provide better access to any new building additions and other projects or programs planned for Amherst in the future.

Submitted by Deb Waldron, Chair